


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 19, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: GRANT APPLICATION TO THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, STATE AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS PROGRAM FOR A BIORETENTION AREA AT FOUR MILE RUN AND A GREEN ROOF AT CORA KELLY MAGNET SCHOOL

ISSUE: Grant application for a feasibility study, design and construction of a 5,000 square foot bioretention area, and the conversion at Cora Kelly Magnet Elementary School of 5,000 square feet of roof into a green roof and associated accessibility structures.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize the City Manager to:

- (1) Submit a grant application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) funding in the amount of \$192,850, to be matched by City funding in the amount of \$157,786, for implementation of these best management practice retrofits; and
- (2) Execute all necessary documents and agreements that may be required to receive this funding under this grant program.

BACKGROUND: The Federal Appropriations Act of FY 2004 made funds available to The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for special water and wastewater infrastructure projects through the STAG program. The City of Alexandria and Arlington County received \$400,000 to be divided equally. The funds were earmarked specifically for "water quality improvements in the Four Mile Run watershed." This grant was received through Congressman Moran's office with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) administering these funds. A 3.58 percent (approximately \$14,300) set-aside is required by VDEQ for management and oversight of this project. The cost-share requirement for these grants is 45 percent recipient and 55 percent federal. Thus, the Federal funds available for expenditure by the City of Alexandria are \$192,850, and combined with the City share of \$157,786, the total project budget is \$350,636.

DISCUSSION: Cora Kelly Magnet Elementary School, located at 3600 Commonwealth Avenue, is adjacent to Four Mile Run. The school has stormwater management facilities that do not meet present standards. Many of the structures in Alexandria share the same condition. This school is an ideal choice to feature the latest technology in low impact development infrastructure retrofits in highly urbanized areas. It is an excellent choice due to its close proximity to Four Mile Run, the educational impact it would have on residents and school students, and its ability to clean and manage a considerable amount of runoff.

The City of Alexandria also intends to construct a 5,000 square foot bioretention area in addition to converting the 5,000 square feet of roof into a green roof and associated accessibility structures at Cora Kelly Magnet Elementary School. Bioretention is a water quality and water quantity control practice that uses the chemical, biological, and physical properties of plants, microbes, and soils for removal of pollutants from storm water runoff.

Both Arlington County and Alexandria have received tentative approval for these projects from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and EPA. Arlington County has decided to use their portion of the funds to retrofit some public facilities with Best Management Practices structures, (generally hydrodynamic structures).

The estimated costs of a feasibility study, design and construction of these two projects is \$238,000. The City of Alexandria share of this project is \$107,100 and the Federal share at \$131,900. The remaining \$111,636 will be used for water quality improvements associated with the Four Mile Run Masterplan such as best management practices to reduce storm water input into the run and wetland bars within the run to improve habitat for aquatic organisms.

FISCAL IMPACT: The STAG grants require a 45 percent local match. A total of \$1.23 million (\$674,800: Developer Contribution; \$552,019: General Fund City match) was budgeted in the FY 2007 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) (p.16) to provide for the construction of a force main to divert flows from the Four Mile Run pump station to the Potomac Yard interceptor. It has been determined that the pump station project can now be funded from developer contributions and sanitary sewer fees. As a result, a portion (\$157,786) of these General Fund provided CIP monies (\$552,019) are now available to provide the City's grant match for the FY 2004 STAG grant. The remaining funds (\$394,233) will eventually be used as the City's match for the FY 2005 STAG grant.

STAFF:

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